385
In323t
v. 1
no. 1

Transportation Topics
FOR CONSUMERS
from the Office of Consumer Affairs

APRIL 1972 / DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION / WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590 / VOL. 1, NO. 1

CITIZENS INVOLVED IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Ann Uccello, the Director of the Department of Transportation, Office of Consumer Affairs, listens to students describe their transportation concerns at a hearing held at Pennsylvania State University. Richard Rittenband, Office of Consumer Affairs Consultant, is at left.

Voice of Consumer Speaks at Transportation Hearings

The Director of the Office of Consumer Affairs, Miss Ann Uccello, began a series of hearings in October 1971 in cities and small towns over the Nation to listen to the individual user's transportation problems.

Secretary Volpe in announcing this pilot program said, "I am directing Miss Uccello to be attentive to the needs, safety, convenience and comfort of the people using transportation services, including the elderly, the handicapped, the disadvantaged and youth."

These meetings are serving two purposes. They give the "man and woman in the street" an opportunity to speak directly with a high official of the Department of Transportation on the scene and they serve to assure that their concerns will come to the attention of the Department of Transportation decision makers.

Views are being sought from the public on at least eight topics: airline travel; railroad travel; bus travel; private auto travel; ship or boat travel; auto, aircraft and boat rental; purchase and use of autos, private aircraft, private boats, motorcycles and bicycles; and the purchase of accessories plus repair and maintenance services; purchase of insurance for vehicles and services.

Continued page 3

Report Urges Community Participation in the Development of Highway Plans

The Citizens' Advisory Committee on Transportation Quality is giving highest priority through 1972 to establishing stronger citizen participation in the development of transportation policies. The Committee pulled no punches in stating "Citizens of this country of all ages are discontented with the inadequacy of the processes of government in failing to give proper recognition to citizen participation and user attitudes."

Last March the Federal Highway Administration presented a set of nine questions to the Citizens' Committee pertaining to matters which make meaningful citizen involvement difficult. Following are some sample questions: How can citizens be motivated to participate in highway planning when the construction of the highway is years away and the whole idea remote? How can one find truly representative community leaders who can speak for the people as a whole? How can trust and understanding be developed between citizens and highway officials?

The Citizens' Advisory Committee accepted the chal-

THE LIBRARY OF THE
AUG 30 1973
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Continued page 3

No Fault Auto Insurance in Effect Now in Some States

Reports from Massachusetts and Puerto Rico, where two different approaches to no-fault automobile insurance have been in operation from one to two years, include such phrases as: "better value for the insurance dollar, better care for accident victims, faster payments of claims and sharply reduced legal and administrative costs"—all terms that cause consumers to perk up and take note.

No-fault is a term used to describe a system of automobile insurance in which the insuring company pays the policyholder for his own loss, instead of protecting him against claims made for losses he may cause to others. In the latter system, it is necessary to determine fault to decide who will pay for which losses. In the no-fault system, fault is not at issue.

Fault, in many cases, is very difficult to determine since so many factors may relate to the cause of an accident.

Continued page 2

Chairman of Citizens' Advisory Committee on Transportation, Leslie L. Blau, (left) presents case for citizen participation in highway planning to Federal Highway Administrator, Francis C. Turner (right). Paul Finney, an editor from New York City, and Joan Begovich, a homemaker from Fullerton, Calif., (center) serve on 21-member Committee.

Transportation Department Focal Point of Consumers

The Office of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Transportation has existed only a few months. The Director, Ann Uccello, resigned her position as Mayor of Hartford, Connecticut, to take on the task of representing consumers in the Department responsible for seeing that the Nation's people, products and goods move as efficiently, conveniently, and safely as possible. No easy task for the Department or for the Director of Consumer Affairs but an exciting and challenging one.

Despite the tremendous progress made in transportation there are many complaints, suggestions, opinions, and questions from consumers who use the system. These are not only welcomed but are being solicited by the Director of the Office of Consumer Affairs in every part of the country from individuals and groups. They are being carefully tabulated and passed on with recommendations to decision makers.

Benjamin O. Davis, a retired Air Force Lt. General, well known as the former Director of the Sky Marshal Program, serves as the Assistant Secretary for Safety and Consumer Affairs in the Department of Transportation. Vincent F. DeCain serves as his deputy. The Office of Consumer Affairs is one of five offices under the Assistant Secretary's direction.

Broadly stated, the mission of the Office of Consumer Affairs is to establish, through various means and techniques, a direct line of communication between the Department of Transportation and the consumer; to evaluate and recommend appropriate action, based on consumer expressions, to the policy leaders in the Department of Transportation for consideration in developing national transportation policies; to institute a program of consumer education and information designed to enable the consumer to become a more knowledgeable and discerning user of transportation goods and services; and to establish a working relationship on consumer matters and activities within the Department of Transportation, with other Departments and Government agencies, with State and local governmental units, and with other groups, both consumer and business, who are concerned with consumer affairs.

Assisting Ann Uccello in carrying out this mission are four Consumer Affairs Specialists and a secretary.

No Fault Auto Insurance (page 1)

Ice, snow, rain, glare, a bump in the road, design of a car, failure of a component part, the momentary inattention of a driver, failure to practice defensive driving—these are just a few of the factors that may contribute to an accident. After an accident, it is difficult to determine all of the factors that are at fault even in court.

The Department of Transportation's two-year, two-million dollar study of automobile insurance spelled out in 23 volumes the problems of the existing system. Conclusions are that the present system:

* ill serves the accident victim, the insuring public, and society at large.
* is inefficient, grossly expensive, incomplete and slow.
* allocates benefits poorly and very unevenly, discourages the use of rehabilitative techniques, and over burdens the courts and legal system.
* does little, if anything, to minimize crash losses.

To replace this outworn and inefficient system, the Administration has urged that the States "begin promptly to shift to a first party, non-fault compensation system for automobile accident victims." A number of States have, in fact, moved to reform their systems. To help the States develop good first party, no-fault plans, the Department and the Ford Foundation have granted funds to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws to draft model legislation reflecting the reform principles being urged by the Administration. The Council of State Governments is also working with the Department to achieve no-fault reform of the auto accident reparations system at the state level.

Free copies of the Department's report on no-fault insurance can be obtained by writing to Secretary John Volpe, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590.

Guide to Child Restraint Safety in Autos Offered

A new booklet is just off the press entitled "What to Buy in Child Restraint Systems." Single copies may be ordered free of charge from Consumer Product Information, Washington, D.C. 20407.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration put the booklet together to tell the parents of young children what a tremendous variety of car seats and car beds—some safe and some not only unsafe but lethal in a highway crash—are being sold from U.S. department stores and auto supply retail counters. A Federal Safety Standard (#213) was established in 1971 and, as of April 1, 1971, requires that manufacturers of child auto seating restraints label these retail products not only with the date and place of manufacture, but with recommendations as to the weight and age of children who can safely use each of these devices. Most important—each manufacturer is required to certify that his child-seat product, if manufactured *after* April 1, 1971, meets all Federal Safety Standards as to st ength and performance, assuring the parent and child auto passenger of real protection in case of a highway crash.

The booklet tells the buyer what to look for and what to avoid in the purchase of safe restraining devices for the young auto passenger. Here are some of the points underscored in reference to children's auto seats:

* *A first rule*—Always look for the manufacturer's label. It is required by law and if it carries a manufacturing date of April 1, 1971, or later it must comply with the new safety standard.
* *A second rule*—Follow the instructions on that label. It must tell what the restraint system is designed to do and the manufacturer must include, in the package, instructions for safe installation and use. Follow them.
* *A third rule*—Don't buy a child's seat constructed of easily bent, flimsy, bare metal strapping, or padded only with thin sponge rubber. These are unsafe.

"What to Buy in Child Restraint Systems" provides guidance for the purchase of car seats, and also infant carriers (car beds) and child harness systems. Its message to parents: "Of all those who may occupy your automobile from time to time none is more innocent of fault nor more dangerously exposed to death and injury in the event of a highway crash than the unrestrained child passenger." This is recommended reading for all parents with young children.

URBAN TRAFFIC MATH

Two buses can carry as many passengers as a mile-long line of automobiles traveling at one-third the speed with perhaps one-twentieth the horsepower.

Fifty buses can transport the same number of commuters as 2,000 automobiles.

Voice of the Consumer (page 1)

The first four hearings were with citizens in Celina, Livingston, and Knoxville, Tennessee, and with students at the University of Tennessee. In December hearings were held in State College and Altoona, Pennsylvania. In January there were four additional ones at Southern Methodist University, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana and Dallas, Texas. Hearings were held in February in Cleveland, Ohio, Atlanta, Ga., and Greensboro, N.C. The consumer expressions at these hearings are now being analyzed. Answers and solutions are being sought for the problems and concerns vocalized at the hearings and turned in on cards provided.

Citizens Involved in Planning (page 1)

lenge from the Federal Highway Administration and sought to find some relevant answers to their questions. Citizen involvement on the part of other private and public agencies was studied. People experienced in community organization and human relations were consulted. A two-day workshop was held in June 1971. Then, last October 27 and 28, the Citizens' group met to review their findings and to discuss them with Federal Highway Administrator Francis C. Turner and his staff.

The Citizens' Committee report entitled "Community Participation in Highway Planning Today," has recently been presented to Secretary Volpe for his consideration and action.

Mr. Leslie L. Blau, Chairman of the Citizens' group, pointed out that the public hearings, as we know them today, cannot overcome antagonisms and deep-seated opposition. Rather, emphasis must be given to a comprehensive program of community relations with the citizens involved even before any formal plans are drawn up. This should include the use of community relations representatives who would go into the highway areas and listen to citizens' views. Such programs would clearly indicate that the government's intentions are to bring citizens into highway planning.

For The Sake of Beauty—Cecil D. Andrus, Governor of Idaho and John A. Volpe, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, help remove a billboard near Boise, Idaho. A country-wide campaign is underway.

Down Come the Billboards!

The Nation's highways are becoming more beautiful and one of the big reasons is the movement to control advertising signs along the roadside. Over 800,000 billboards bordering 265,000 miles of highways should come down to achieve compliance with minimum guidelines. The goal is to get the job done by the end of 1976. A nationwide program to remove these signs from federally funded interstate and primary road systems has been launched by the U.S. Department of Transportation in cooperation with the States. Outdoor advertising along the interstate and federally funded primary road system is controlled by the Highway Beautification Act of 1965. The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1970 provided 97.5 million dollars over a six-year period to implement removal.

The modest beginning is quite evident along Maine's Route 201 north of Skowhegan by the shores of Wyman Lake and on the prairie outside Cheyenne, Wyoming where billboards along some roads have been removed. Local citizens are also quite pleased with the improved landscape outside Boise, Idaho, and on some roads in Colorado.

The Highway Beautification Act does allow for signs adjacent to highways inside areas zoned commercial and industrial, but they must be controlled as to size, lighting and spacing according to agreement between the States and the Department of Transportation. Minimum requirements must be met even in these commercial and industrial areas. Outside these specified areas no sign can be erected or displayed within 660 feet of the nearest edge of the right-of-way except directional signs, official historical and scenic markers, and signs related to the property on which they are located. The Secretary can reduce federal-aid funds by 10 percent per year if States fail to make provision for effective control.

There are now 37 States, including Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, in full compliance with the Act and several of these are busy removing billboards. The results are a joy to behold!

We hope you will join in the campaign to see that highways in your state are kept free of unattractive and unnecessary signs.

How Your State Stands on Billboards

As of February 1972, States designated A are in full compliance with the federal billboard law and are receiving Federal funds, B are in full compliance but not yet receiving funds, C have conforming laws and are negotiating toward agreements, and D have unsatisfactory legislation or no laws at all.

Alabama	D
Alaska	B
Arizona	B
Arkansas	A
California	A
Colorado	A
Connecticut	A
Delaware	A
Florida	B
Georgia	B
Hawaii (strict controls since 1911)	
Idaho	A
Illinois	D
Indiana	A
Iowa	D
Kansas	D
Kentucky	A
Louisiana	B
Maine	A
Maryland	A
Massachusetts	B
Michigan	D
Minnesota	A
Mississippi	D
Missouri	D
Montana	B
Nebraska	D
Nevada	A
New Hampshire	A
New Jersey	B
New Mexico	B
New York	A
North Carolina	B
North Dakota	B
Ohio	B
Oklahoma	D
Oregon	A
Pennsylvania	B
Rhode Island	B
South Carolina	B
South Dakota	D
Tennessee	D
Texas	D
Utah	A
Vermont	A
Virginia	A
Washington	A
West Virginia	A
Wisconsin	D
Wyoming	A
District of Columbia	B
Puerto Rico	B

3-Stage Program Increases Auto Occupant Safety

The all-out program to reduce deaths and injuries on the Nation's highways includes a three-stage crash protection program related to occupant protection within the car, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the Department of Transportation. The three stages are as follows:

STAGE 1—JANUARY 1, 1972

Cars manufactured after this date are required to have improved lap and shoulder belt systems with a "Fasten Seat Belt" warning light and a buzzer to encourage belt usage.

STAGE 2—AUGUST 15, 1973

Further improvements in the lap and shoulder belt system will be required, including an ignition interlock which prevents starting the car unless the safety belts are fastened.

STAGE 3—AUGUST 15, 1975

All '76 model cars, some of which will hit the market in late summer of '75, must have a completely passive protection system. In a passive system the driver and the occupants have nothing to do to make the system work—no seat belts to buckle—no controls to set. The standard calls for no injury to any occupants in the car in a 30-mile-an-hour, head-on crash into a solid barrier. The following year the standard will require no injury in a 40-mile-an-hour crash.

With the advent of this completely passive protection system, safety belts will no longer be required by Federal Safety Standards.

Some of the other priority programs in the NHTSA aimed at saving lives on the highway include a national campaign to get the problem drinker from behind the wheel, experimental safety vehicles and "energy-managing auto structures." "Energy-managing structures" means vehicles so constructured that, in the event of a collision, certain components will collapse in a controlled manner to absorb the force of the impact and minimize injuries.

Air Bag Not Only Way to Meet Passive Restraint Standards

Most automobile users know by now that the U.S. Department of Transportation and its National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are determined to require an automatic occupant protection system inside all autos used in this country. Many consumers mistakenly believe this means the NHTSA is requiring auto manufacturers to install the much debated air bag which is able to sense an impending highway crash and will pop out of the dash board or the seatback to cushion hurtling passengers against the bone-crushing impacts generated by a collision. This is not true. Though the air bag seems to offer the most protection at the present time, the standard may be met by other methods.

The NHTSA's Federal Safety Standard #208 is a "passive restraint" standard—not an air bag standard as it is often called. This means that any device which can furnish the crash protection the standard requires is acceptable under the standard.

What other systems are there besides the air bag? There are a number of sophisticated seatbelt systems under study. One system is designed and anchored so that neither the driver nor the car passenger can be seated in the vehicle without being securely belted, lap and torso. If this system proves able to provide the required protection automatically, it may meet the requirements of Standard 208. There are devices which activate protective nets and others that combine extra interior padding with new body designs aimed at control of the lethal energy generated in collision. One interesting alternative is the "security blanket," a fabric shield that pops forward and holds the car's occupants in place. Any or all of these, if they provide the protection required at the crash speeds spelled out by Standard 208, are acceptable under the Federal Standard.

Air bags offer the most promise at the present time for future reduction in auto injury and death rates.

While it is true that many automotive experts, including some in the NHTSA, refer to the air bag as the "the most promising system" yet devised—because it appears able to protect across a maximum range of highway crash speeds and types—it is still not the Federal intent nor the meaning of Standard 208 to force the auto industry or the consumer into using any particular protection system. The intent is this: to require a protective system which is automatic (passive) in operation and which will prevent death or injury in the majority of highway crashes that do occur and will continue to occur on U.S. highways in the years ahead. The Department believes this is a reasonable, attainable goal—and at a cost well within the American consumer's means.

That is what Standard 208—the passive restraint standard—is all about.

TRANSPO 72 – Transportation Spectacular

WHEN AND WHERE: May 27–June 4, 1972, Dulles International Airport, Washington, D.C.

SHOW HOURS: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, closed to the public 9 a.m. to noon May 30 and 31, June 1 and 2.

SPONSOR: Authorized by the Congress, developed and produced by the United States Department of Transportation.

PHYSICAL SITE: 360 acres on the Dulles Airport grounds. Actual site extends for a mile and a half along the westernmost runway. Parking areas adjacent to the grounds and connected to the grounds by shuttle bus will provide space for 50,000 cars and 600 charter buses. Four huge steel exposition halls will afford 320,000 square feet of indoor exhibit space: one million square feet will be devoted to outdoor exhibit space. Industry also will occupy 130 business centers. Food, personal comfort and medical facilities will be provided.

ATTENDANCE: Research indicates we can expect 1,125,000 visitors; of these, 50,000 will be from abroad and 350,000 will be business visitors.

EXHIBITS: Exhibits, demonstrations, and displays from all modes of transportation—land, sea, air and space—will be featured. In addition, a number of professional and technical symposia will be held in conjunction with TRANSPO. Already scheduled are meetings on electronics, meteorology, air cargo, air transportation and surface transportation. Others are in the planning stage.

AIR AND GROUND SHOWS: Air and surface shows will be held daily and will include all forms of transportation. Major shows are scheduled for June 3 and 4. These will be more extensive than the daily shows.

Watch the papers for special events and other Transpo activities as they are announced. Make a visit to Transpo 72 a must!

Glossary of New Transportation Terms

A whole new list of interesting terms has been added to the transportation vocabulary in recent years. You probably see and hear some of them frequently. Just in case you are not already familiar with them, here are some brief definitions that may be helpful.

TRANSPO 72	*United States International Transportation Exposition to be held May 27–June 4, 1972, at Dulles Airport, Washington, D.C. The latest in all modes of transportation will be displayed and demonstrated for the benefit of trade as well as the public.*
DOT	*Stands for the United States Department of Transportation that was officially activated April 1, 1967.*

UMTA *(Pronounced 'um.ta) Initials for Urban Mass Transportation Administration within the Department of Transportation. Their priority program is to aid cities in solving recently increasing transportation problems.*

NHTSA *(Pronounced 'Nit.sa) Initials that stand for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, one of the seven operating administrations within the Department of Transportation. Their mandate is to reduce highway accidents.*

AMTRAK *The National Railroad Passenger Service Corporation, established in 1970 by Act of Congress, to provide passenger service over a basic national network; began operations May 1971 in Wash., D.C.*

ELECTRONIC HIGHWAY *A road on which the speed and traffic flow of specially equipped automobiles are regulated by a system of computers, electronic sensors, and other devices placed within and along the roadway.*

ESVs (Experimental Safety Vehicles) *Full size, family sedan test vehicle. Its highest priority is the survival of occupants in 50 mph barrier crashes, rollover crashes up to 70 mph, and other equally demanding accident situations.*

ACV (Air Cushion Vehicle) *A vehicle that propels itself over land or water on a thin layer or "cushion," of air without wheels or other support, virtually eliminating the friction that slows up conventional surface vehicles.*

TACV (Tracked Air Cushion Vehicle) *An air cushion vehicle (see ACV) that travels suspended over a fixed guideway. The Department of Transportation in 1972 will begin testing of this research vehicle at speeds up to 300 mph to gather data required for the design of passenger-carrying systems.*

CONTAINERIZATION *The method of packing and shipping cargo in standardized boxes or containers. It is increasingly popular in sea, air, and surface transportation since it permits easier handling.*

MONORAIL *A transportation system in which a vehicle travels along a single rail, either suspended from the rail or riding atop it.*

METROLINER *Experimental electric - powered, high-speed trains now running between New York and Washington as part of a federal demonstration program to test whether faster traveling time and comforts similar to those enjoyed on airlines will reattract passengers to rail travel. The Metroliner is capable of traveling at more than 150 mph, although track conditions, safety and other considerations have so far limited speeds to below the maximum rate.*

TURBO TRAIN *An experimental high-speed train, powered by an aircraft-type engine, now in operation between Boston and New York, and between Washington, D.C. and Parkersburg, West Va.*

HYDROFOIL SHIP *A vessel that moves over the water's surface on submerged, winglike structures—hydrofoils—which are shaped in such a way that the water lifts up the vessel in the same way that air-foils cause air to support wings of a plane.*

BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) *First all new rail rapid transit and subway system to be built in the U.S. in decades, serving San Francisco and the Bay area.*

BUS RAPID TRANSIT *Innovative use of highway facilities to provide fast line-haul service on separate bus roadway, exclusive bus lanes on urban freeways, or preferential treatment for buses as compared to private vehicles.*

CAS (Collision Avoidance System) *A device in an airplane designed to alert a pilot to the close proximity of other aircraft and instruct him in which direction to fly to avoid a midair collision.*

AIR BAG *A folded fabric bag that automatically and instantaneously inflates in an accident to protect vehicle occupants from injury by cushioning and absorbing the crash forces.*

DIAL-A-RIDE *Neighborhood shuttle bus by telephone request system being tested in cities to give riders service that combines the convenience of taxis with the economy of buses.*

ALPHA

This is the *first* issue of "Transportation Topics for Consumers." It is being sent to you because of your leadership activities or expressed interest in the solution of consumer problems that relate to transportation.

The Secretary of Transportation wants to give full and appropriate consideration to the public, users, carriers, industry, labor, and the national defense in decision making. Opinions and needs of the individual consumer are not always easy to obtain. It is our hope that this publication will help as we attempt in many ways to establish a two-way communication between the Department of Transportation and consumers. We want to inform you and your contacts about what is being done and why; and we hope you will inform us of consumer transportation problems and how well attempted solutions are working. Through this exchange we can be sure the decision makers have the consumer's point of view as they work for a safer, more convenient and more efficient transportation system to best serve everyone.

We hope to hear from you.

Office of Consumer Affairs
Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

FIRST CLASS

U.S.MAIL

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 084230694